

*Second Contribution to the Study of Folk-Lore in Philadelphia
and Vicinity.*

By Henry Phillips, Jr.

(Read before the American Philosophical Society, March 18, 1892.)

SIGNS, PORTENTS AND OMENS.

Sunday is always the best or the worst day of the week.

If one sews anything upon a garment that is already on, it is a sure sign that some one will tell a falsehood about you.

It is unlucky to measure a child with a yardstick before it can walk.

It is unlucky to get out of bed left foot foremost.

It is unlucky to count one's money, as it will surely decrease.

One must never count what is eaten, as hunger and poverty will be the result later in life.

A servant who comes on Saturday makes a short flitting.

If a man dies suddenly, leaving any appointments unfulfilled, his ghost will keep them.

It is lucky to dream of excrement.

Children who pick dandelions will urinate in their bed (*pis-en-lit*).

Bachelors' and old maids' children are always well brought up and well behaved.

Vessels named after women are unlucky as compared with those bearing the names of men.

Vessels with a boasting or high-sounding title (such as *Monarch of the Seas*, *Dreadnaught*, etc.) are unlucky.

It is unlucky to name a child after one of the same name, that has died.

When speaking of one's good fortune, one must always add: "I hope I speak in a lucky hour."

One must always wear something new on Easter day.

One must always wear something new on New Year's day.

A four-leaved clover is considered to bring good luck to its finder.

The tick of the "death watch" announces the speedy death of a member of the family.

If you can't make a fire you'll get a bad husband.

Throw pepper after a disagreeable person to prevent his return.

Make a wish when a spotted horse is seen.

It is unlucky to twirl a chair upon one of its legs.

Crusts make whiskers grow.

An M marked in the palm of the hand indicates good fortune.

A woman who cuts bread into thin slices will make a poor stepmother.

Scissors and other steel articles should be hid during a thunder storm to prevent a thunderbolt.

Touching a corpse prevents bad dreams of it.

To dream of the dead is lucky.

Nose itching means sight of a stranger.

Heads of snakes never die until sundown.

Eels put on the land turn to snakes.

Never look over a person's shoulder into a mirror.

A fork dropped foretells a male visitor ; a knife, a woman.

When the wind closes a shutter a stranger is announced.

If one drops a morsel in putting it to the mouth some one wants it.

If the first visitor to the house on a New Year is a man, good luck.

Go to watch meeting New Year's eve to obtain good luck throughout the year.

To rock an empty rocking chair will make angry its most constant occupant.

A Scotchman should never give a Bible.

Meeting eyebrows denote a contrary disposition ; likewise hard to trust.

Very light eyes denote a shallow, variable disposition.

Blue eye beauty, do its mother's duty ;

Brown eye ran away and told a lie.

To see the new moon over the right shoulder is lucky ; over the left, unlucky.

Two white feet look, well about him ;

Three white feet, do well without him ;

Four white feet and a white nose—

Throw him to the crows.

It is unlucky, when walking with a person in the street, to permit any one to pass between and divide you.

It is unlucky to pass under a ladder.

If the *left* hand itches or burns it is a sign of paying out money ; if the *right*, of receiving it.

BIRTH, DEATH AND MARRIAGE.

Two spoons accidentally placed in the tea saucer signifies a wedding.

Rhymes for brides-elect :

Married in white, you have chosen all right ;
Married in gray, you will go far away ;
Married in black, you will wish yourself back.

A white animal entering foretells death.

A child born face downwards never lives.

To drop a wedding ring from the finger indicates divorce.

If you marry in May
You will live a year and a day.

If you marry in Lent
You will live to repent.

FOLK MEDICINE.

To cure fits in a cat one should bite off a small piece of its tail.

Warts will be produced if one handles a frog or a toad.

Warts can be removed by anointing with fasting spittle.

When one sneezes he must say : "To your everlasting beauty."

An eelskin worn about the ankle will keep off cramps.

Piercing the ears will improve the sight.

April snow applied to the face will improve the complexion.

It is ill luck to change a sick person's bedding.

The hair of a seventh son, in succession, prevents whooping-cough.

A drop of the sufferer's urine in the ear will cure earache.

Swinging a baby completely by the skirts prevents liver trouble.

A seventh months child can live, an eighth months cannot.

A copper penny dipped in vinegar and applied to a ring-worm cures it.

Tie your stocking around your neck on retiring to cure sore throat.

Sleeping towards the east produces headache.

Steal a potato, rub one-half on a wart and lose it to remove the wart.

SEASONS, WEATHER, ETC.

Evening red and morning gray
Will send the traveler on his way.

A dried snake hung up in a draught will produce a rain.

A star near the moon means a storm.

The first three days of a month declare its character.

On the second of July the Virgin Mary goes to visit her cousin Elizabeth; the weather on that day indicates the weather for the next six weeks, that being the length of the visit.

A green Christmas means a white Easter.

The departure and return of wild geese and crows announces winter and spring.

When the white side of the leaves is exposed by the wind a storm approaches.

When the dandelions are closed there will be rain.

In the spring there comes the blossom storm.

There is always a heavy storm to fill the streams before they freeze.

On the 2d of August comes the Lammas floods.

Ember days indicate the weather of the seasons.

The rain that makes large bubbles as it falls will be of long continuance.

If it clears up at night, the next night will be rainy.

Further Notes on Fuegian Languages.

By D. G. Brinton, M.D., LL.D.

(Read before the American Philosophical Society, May 6, 1892.)

Since the publication of my study on the Patagonian and Fuegian dialects in the *Proceedings* of the American Philosophical Society (No. 137, 1892), several important vocabularies have come to my notice.